



'Krugman's New Economic Geography and Industrial Localisation: A Case Study of Sankrail Food Park, Howrah, West Bengal, India

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History Received on: 04 December, 2023 Accepted in Revised Form on: 15 February, 2024 Available Online on and from: 21 March, 2024</p> <p>Keywords Agglomeration, External Economies, Mega Food Park, New Economic Geography, Technological spillover, Vertical linkage</p> <p>Licenses CC: by-nc-nd/4.0/</p>	<p>One of the most important aspects of regional as well as economic geography is determining the location of industries, which is the oldest subject of economic geography. In the past, many geographers and economists have given various theoretical insights about the location of industries: among them Hoover, Rawstron, Weber, Christaller, Losch, and Isard are popular. Hoover, Weber, Rawstron, and Fitter emphasized the least cost factor in the industrial location, on the other hand, Losch and Isard talked about profit maximization and the principle of substitution. In the 1990s, with Krugman's New Economic Geography, the concept of the location of industry was redefined. He emphasized the importance of spatial aspects of the economy and transportation for industrial locations. He also discussed the urban agglomeration for industrial locations on a small scale based on Marshallian external economies. Many researchers have used the concept of this theory to explain the location of any industry. Among different manufacturing industries food processing industry is one of the most important and distinctive industries in West Bengal, and the food park is an extended part of this industry. Our purpose in this paper is to discuss the applicability of Krugman's theory for the location of food parks with special reference to Sankrail food park. In this paper, we used the mixed method, which includes both qualitative and quantitative techniques. It is observed that pure external economies, a good transportation system, large market size, spatial agglomeration, and good political economy contributed to the formation of this food park in the semi-urban part of Sankrail. However, all factors (technology spillover, knowledge spillover) of Krugman's theory are not fully applicable in the case of this Food Park.</p> <p> © All Rights Reserved: ISSS 2024</p>

Introduction

India is one of the agriculturally based countries in the world with its wide variability of climate and soil, produces a large range of horticultural crops such as fruits, vegetables, potatoes, and spices (Government of India, 2002, pp. 46-48). Some modernization and commercialization of Indian agriculture occurred during World War I when various crop-based food processing industries were established, mainly to meet the needs of the armed forces. After the World War II, this industry extended mainly based on local demand (Sidhu, 2005). After the green revolution based on high-yielding seeds and chemical fertilizers, production increased many times. India became self-dependent to fulfill the demand of all Indians, based on these surplus food productions. Indian Government hence planned to expand the food processing industry on a large scale. As it was a nascent industry, it faced many problems among them most important was the wastage of food products during transportation between the farm and the production centre. Mainly due to a lack of advanced technology,

many crops were destroyed due to high temperatures and the lack of a freezing system during transportation. Another problem is the insecurity of farmers due to the lack of connectivity between farmers and sellers. So often they didn't get the expected price and faced huge losses. To overcome all these problems, the Government of India adopted a new strategy in the field of transportation and storage to develop the food processing industry. The Government of India in collaboration with the Ministry of Food Processing Industry planned to set up Food Parks. The idea behind setting up such food parks is to find access to capital-intensive facilities, such as cold storage, warehouses, quality control laboratories, effluent treatment plants, etc. It is expected that such advantages help to increase the efficiency of the food processing industry.

Food Park is a system that brings together producers, sellers, and retailers in one place and provides a direct linkage among them (Ministry of Food Processing Industry, 1994). In the late 20th century, thirty food parks were sanctioned by the Government of India

with the collaboration of the Ministry of Food Processing Industry in various parts of the country including West Bengal (Ministry of Food Processing Industry, 2008). West Bengal has six Agro Climatic zones and there are varying Agri horticultural practices in these zones, producing myriad crops and vegetables over the time horizon of a single year. This encouraged the setting up of more food parks in different parts of West Bengal.

Many researchers have discussed the locational factors of manufacturing industries based on the classical model but never gave importance to Food Park, which is a very important industrial unit. In this paper, we want to discuss the locational factors of Food Parks with special reference to Howrah Sankrail Food Park in the context of Krugman's theoretical insights. There is a scope for a comparative study of locational theory between New Economic Geography and Classical Geography. We think this paper will be very helpful to future researchers to identify the difference between Krugman's and Marshall's theories. It will be also helpful to get an idea of the application of External economies in industrial locations. The limitation of this research is, it only considers Krugman's theory, and not the comparative study with classical theory.

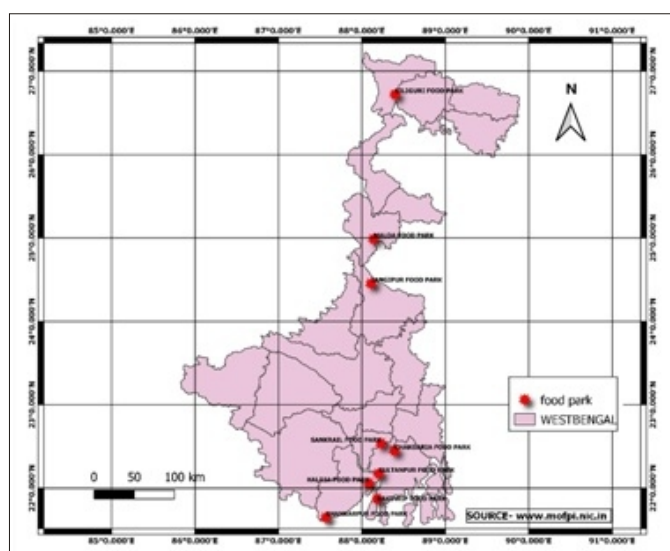


Fig.1: Location and Layout of the Food Park

The Study Area with A Layout of Sankrail Food Park

There are 9 food parks in West Bengal among them one is Mega Food Park (Jangipur Food Park), which is operated by the Central Government and the others are maintained by the State Government. Fig.1 shows the location of different food parks in West Bengal. For this study, we have selected Sankrail Food Park because it is the largest state operational Food Park in West Bengal, operating since 2005. This Food Park is an integrated park, situated at a distance of about 28 km from Kolkata by road. The geographical location is 22°34' N latitude and 88°11' E longitude. It is divided into three different phases, among them, phase-I and II are running successfully and phase III is under construction (Fig. 2).

Phase- I (Sudha Ras Food Park) an integrated industrial park on 49.98 acres area, was inaugurated on 15th February 2006 by the then Chief Minister of West-Bengal. Phase-II (Kandua Food Park) being the 3rd food park was set up in West Bengal in the year 2012-2013 on 54 acres area. Phase III is proposed to be set up on

an effective area of 34.12 acres, which will be a fully integrated industrial park with all the basic facilities. Our aim in this paper is to provide an assessment of the applicability of Krugman's theory for the formation of a food park in the context of Sankrail.

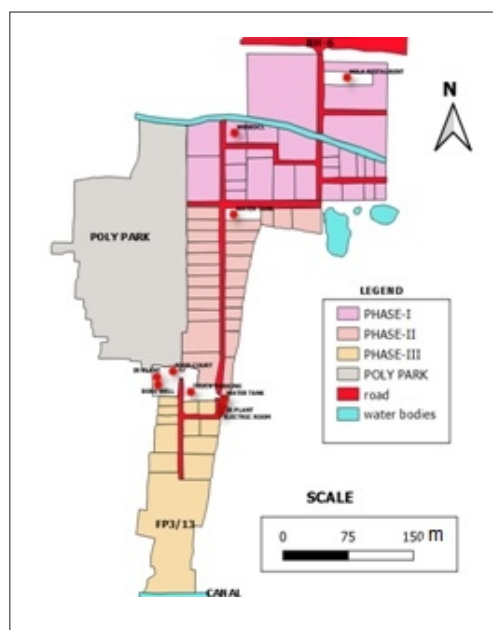


Fig.2: Layout of the Food Park

Objectives

The main objectives of this paper are

1. To identify the different factors which affect the location of food parks in general.
2. To analyze the favourable factors for the location of the food park in Sankrail, Howrah.
3. To assess the applicability of different locational factors after Krugman.

Methodology

The methodology in Fig. 3 has been adopted to carry out the research. In the first step, we have reviewed related literature, based on this literature aim and objectives of the study have been formulated. After completing this, study area delineation has been carried out. This meets our second and third objectives of the study. In the third step, data and information have been collected from primary as well as secondary sources. As a secondary source, the website of the Ministry of Food Processing Industry and WBIDC was used. The District Handbook, and other published news in newspapers were referred. In the final stage, collected data has been analyzed using mapping and cartographic techniques on Q-GIS 3.16 software.

For this research, a mixed research method is used, which includes both qualitative and quantitative techniques. We have selected samples by stratified sampling method, where the first strata are the people inside the park and 2nd is the people outside the park. The primary information and data were collected by a semi-structured questionnaire survey with the managers and the local people who are directly or indirectly engaged with this park. Transporters, and shop owners were also interviewed to understand the background of the location of this food park. To know the history of the formation of this food park, we have used the ethnography method, through in-depth interviewing and observation. Table 1 shows the sample size and sampling method.

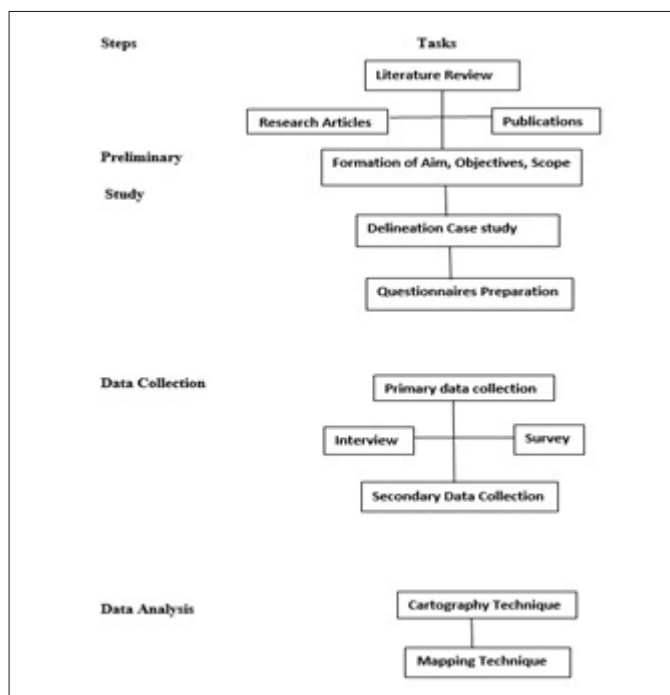


Fig.2: Methodology Flowchart

For data analysis, we have used two types of techniques: qualitative and quantitative technique. We have used descriptive analytics to describe and understand the role of different socio-economic factors. We analyzed the formational factors of food parks based on the localization theory by Krugman in his New Economic Geography.

Results and Findings

Different Locational Factors After Krugman

A region becomes a better location for the industry if the area has a bigger market, greater availability of raw materials, lower production cost, low transport cost, greater prospects, greater favour from management, and greater encouragement from the government (Smith,1971p.53). However, in practice, we do not find all factors in favour of a particular location. In the real world, some factors make a place favourable while others make a particular place unfavorable.

Since the late 1970s the field of 'new economic geography' emerged. Krugman in his New Economic Geography has discussed the localization theory of any economy based on internal and external factors (Krugman 1989; 1991).He gave the idea of location theory following the agglomeration concept by Weber and Marxist political economy, which includes social, cultural and institutional factors. Krugman put forward four propositions in his theory:

- Transportation costs play a key role in inter-regional, and international trade as well as industrial location.
- Spatial agglomeration of economic activity helps to save costs and increase benefits.
- This cost-saving and increasing of benefit promotes further concentration of development.
- Early development advantages lead to the long-term accumulation of economic development.

According to him, the location of production of a firm strictly depends on the trade-off between centripetal (act as a positive

factor) and centrifugal forces (it is an outward force that acts as a negative factor).Centripetal forces are market size, thick labour market and pure external economies, whereas external forces mean immobile factors, high land rent and external dis-economies. Krugman used the most contemporary indicators for analyzing the more realistic economies. All the indicators of New Economic Geography that are applied for the formation of this food park are-

Least Transport Cost

Krugman in his model discussed the significance of transport costs in the formation of any industry. According to him "transport cost" is a key factor for the explanation of industrial clustering and formation of core-periphery regions(Krugman,1993: cited in Liang & Plakins,2022, p.420). Venables (2008) introduced cost linkage between an upstream and downstream sector in the economy, which is known as 'vertical linkage'. Upstream operation means extracting and producing materials, whereas downstream indicates the post-production process and bringing products to the customers. Later Krugman, Venables, and Fujita explained the role of transport cost in economic development based on vertical linkage. This cost linkage acts as a forward linkage, referring to the location of economic activities close to the firms' supplying materials and creating agglomeration. According to him, transportation cost is the primary reason for agglomeration.

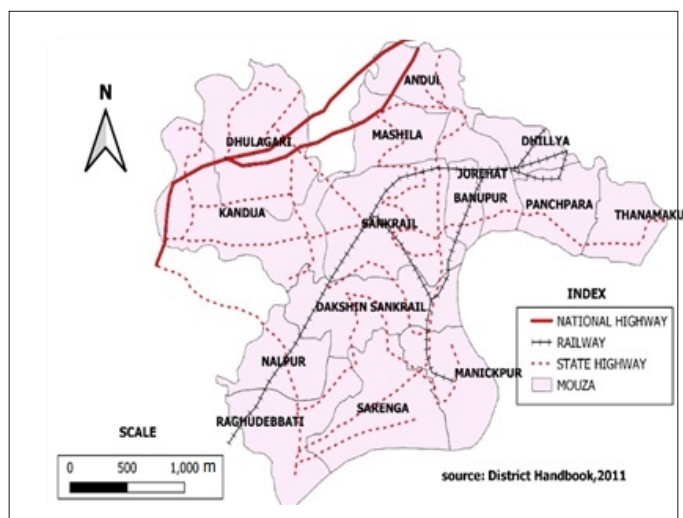


Fig.4: Transport Network in and surrounding Sankrail, Howrah

Least transport cost is one of the important factors for the set-up of this food park. This food park is located in a nodal part of Sankrail, which is situated on 4-lane NH-6 (renumbered as NH-16 in 2010), the construction of its 6-lane is in progress. This route of over 1949 km is from Surat to Kolkata and connects different states and cities of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Sambalpur, Raipur, Nagpur, and other districts in West Bengal i.e., East Medinipur, West Medinipur, and Kolkata. This highway also connects the other blocks of Howrah like Bagnan, Uluberia, Panchla, and Jagacha. Two state highways connect this place with different districts of West Bengal: SH-6 connects this place with Bardhaman and Birbhum and SH-15 connects this place with Bardhaman and Hooghly. According to the fieldsurvey, all the necessary raw materials are brought cheaply through this road

network, and the manufactured goods are exported within and outside the country. It is also connected with the different cities of West Bengal by railways. Besides roadways, it also facilitates railway transport, because it is situated only 5km away from Sankrail station.

Through the Southeastern Railway, this food park is connected to Midnapore, Kharagpur, Haldia, Amta, etc. It is comparatively nearer to the Kolkata port (28 km distance) and Haldia port (almost 104 km distance), It is also close to Netaji Subhas International Airport. This good transportation network helps to import raw materials and export productions to the market. This high accessibility of this zone reduced the transport cost, which has created favourable conditions for establishing this food park in the region. After the construction of this park, auto and toto (public transport services at a small scale) started here which facilitated the commuting of the local workers and people too. Fig.4 shows the transportation network in and around Sankrail Food Park.

Effects of External Economies

The concept of external economies was introduced by Marshall, which was informal. Based on the Marshallian concept Jacob Viner and John Chipman described the concept of external economies. In the 1990s Krugman used Marshall's theorization of external economies to explain geographical clustering at a small scale. But there is a big difference between Marshall and Krugman's concept of externalities. Krugman gave an idea of External economies with inter-industry linkage and labour migration (known as pecuniary externalities), which were not discussed by Marshall. Krugman's external economies were renamed as "pecuniary externalities", which was introduced by Scitovsky (1954), which means labour pooling market. In Krugman's view, the location of an industry at the regional level and its agglomeration depends on three types of external economies: technological externalities, labour pooling, and suppliers.

Technological Externalities

Technological externalities are very important and directly influence production functions (Krugman, 1991bp. 485). It refers to a situation where there are spillovers of the production function from one farm into those of another farm. In the case of this food park technological availability is very significant for the formation of this industrial agglomeration at a small scale, though technological spillover does not suit here. The necessary technologies for the setup of any food park are a warehouse, cold storage, a building for training workers and a modern godown with all facilities. In the case of Sankrail Food Park, there are many warehouses, cold stores, and godowns available inside and outside of the park. Besides the own warehouses, rental warehouses and godowns are also available here. The rent of these warehouses is comparatively lower than in other parts of Howrah. The semi-furnished and un-furnished rental warehouses with low rent are available in Dhulagarh, Sankrail, Jalalpur, Ramchandrapur, and Ranihati. The rental charge of a warehouse is Rs 20 to 22/sq. ft in Dhulagarh, Rs15-19/sq. ft in Sankrail and Jalalpur and it is Rs17-19/sq. ft in Ranihati and Ramchandrapur (based on magicbricks.com). There are two multipurpose cold storage with a capacity of 10,3412 quintals (*Director of Agri Marketing, 2011*).

The uninterrupted power supply by WBSEB (substation of WBSEDCL) is one of the important factors in the development of this Food Park. In this Food Park, the power supply capacity by the WBSEDCL substation is 30 MVA or Mega Volt Amp (wbpower.gov.in). There are many overhead water tanks with a capacity to contain almost 5 lakh litres of water. This comprehensive drainage and sewerage system boost to set up this food park in Sankrail (Primary survey).

Inter-regional Labour Migration-

Due to industrial agglomeration, the labour cost is also cheaper than any part of Howrah. It attracts many skilled and semi-skilled workers from periphery regions, which creates intra-regional and inter-regional migration. The availability of workers is one of the important causes of the development of this park. Most of the workers come from Amta, Jayanagar, Panchla, Hooghly, Dankuni, and Kolkata. Mainly due to the seasonal unemployment most of the jari workers (who are engaged in the art of decorating clothes by weaving golden and silver threads) and local farmers recently have been engaged in this food park. Many skilled and semi-skilled workers come from Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and the boundary region of Odisha. The supply of low-cost labourers led to the development of this food park.

To know the concentration of this food park, we have applied the technique of Location Quotient (LQ). Here the L.Q. value is calculated based on the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} LQ &= (\text{Workers in this Food Park} / \text{Total workers in Food park in West Bengal}) / (\text{total workers in Howrah District} / \text{Total Workers in West Bengal}) \\ &= (21000 / 54460) / (1819845 / 22388044) \\ &= 4.75 \end{aligned}$$

The number of workers in this Sankrail food park is 21000, where 1500 people are directly and 2500 people are indirectly engaged in Kandua Food Park, 2000 people are directly and 15000 people are indirectly engaged in Sudha Ras Food Park (WBIDC); 54460 persons are directly and indirectly engaged in food parks, in West Bengal (Food Processing Industries Report). The calculated L.Q value is more than 1 which represents the concentration of this park in this location is due to labour accessibility.

Suppliers

In the case of Sankrail Food Park, the availability of raw materials is more significant than other factors. The main raw materials of this park are tomatoes, potatoes, wheat, edible oil, spices, etc. Its weight-losing nature supports the location of this park near the raw material centre (Weber, 1909: cited in David, 2002, p.02). As Food Park is crop-based it is mostly located in a different agro-climatic zone based on a surplus of production. There are six agroclimatic zones in West Bengal: Terai zone, Gangetic zone, Lateritic zone, Hilly zone, Old alluvial zone, and Coastal saline zone. Howrah is located in the Gangetic alluvial zone with deep fertile soil, favourable climatic factors, and new alluvial soil which helps to produce surplus production. The main crops in this district are brinjal, cauliflower, tomato, jackfruits, and potatoes. The availability of raw materials from the local area and the surrounding districts (Hooghly, South 24 Parganas, Medinipur, North 24 Parganas, Nadia), led to the development of the different phases of the food park here. There is a scope to get adequate raw materials from the neighbouring states through the National

Highway-6. Many raw materials like potatoes, gram flour, and oil are brought cheaply from Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Pune, and also from other parts of West Bengal. Table. 2 shows the raw material linkage based on different sectors of food processing industries.

Thick Market

In Krugman's words, "Because of the costs of transacting across distance, the preferred locations for each producer are those where demand is large and supply of input is particularly convenient" (Krugman, 1991, p.12). According to him, the thick home market as well as the international market plays a key role in the formation of any economy.

Large market size is one of the important centripetal factors for the formation of this food park at Sankrail. With the increasing population and trend of urbanization, the lifestyle of people has changed within and outside West Bengal. Due to busy schedules, traditional food habits have changed into modern food habits, thus increasing the demand for processed foods at local and regional levels. There is a huge demand for these products not only within West Bengal but also in the national and international markets, which helps in the further growth of this food park. The processed food is also exported outside of India, especially East Pacific countries i.e., China, Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Laos. This high demand for food products throughout the world helps in the development of this food park. Table. 3 shows the number of exports from this food park to the different countries.

Industrial Agglomeration

Weber first introduced the idea of industrial agglomeration for the formation of any industry (1909). Agglomeration means the concentration of many industries which helps to the cheapening of production costs and labour costs in an area. Krugman has reframed the idea of industrial agglomeration in his paper on new economic geography. Krugman introduced this industrial agglomeration on a small scale or regional level. According to him, the location of the possibilities of industrial agglomeration is determined by a trade-off between centripetal and centrifugal forces. This agglomeration depends on market size and technological advantages. He described the formation of this agglomeration by the "circular cumulative causation" process (Myrdal) in his Core Periphery model (Krugman, 1991 p.13). According to Krugman, a single producer moving towards a new region increases the local supply of goods, which reduces the price of goods, attracts new customers and the market size becomes larger because of new customer entry. By chain effect, larger domestic markets tend to make the manufacturing sector more concentrated in a region and create an agglomeration. This demand linkage acts as a backward linkage, creates a low-cost linkage as a forward linkage, and helps to form agglomeration. It not only helps in capital accumulation and decreases transport costs (according to Weber) but also helps to further the progress of economic concentration.

This food park is located near Dhulagarh in an industrial belt where many industries are agglomerated. The main industries in this zone are Chandamukhe Impex Ltd- Dhulagarh, Electro Zavod Pvt Ltd, Lahi Wala Steel Ltd, HR Steel Industries, Ambuja Cement Limited, Exide Industries Ltd, and Sankrail Poly Park. In

this industrial belt due to the concentration of many industries, the transportation cost and labor costs decreased which boosted the setup of this food park. This Food Park developed here as a propulsive leading industry. Based on this food manufacturing industry many interlinked industries were developed here. It helps to create spatial agglomeration along with many ancillary industries. Based on the different manufacturing companies in this food park, many packaging industries (Green Packing Industries, Raja packing Industries) and logistics companies (Innovative Logistic companies, VRL Logistic, B. L Transport & Co.) developed in and around Sankrail.

The Political Economy

Political economy was first introduced by Adam Smith in his book 'Wealth of Nations', then elaborated by Karl Marx based on capitalism. In most contemporary economic geography, political economy is one of the important locational factors of any industry. Krugman introduced the idea of political economy in geographical and historical contexts, where he gave the importance of the role of government. Krugman stated that there is a strong relationship between the political system and the economic situation everywhere (1991). This political economy means the government initiatives and the relation between the government and local people towards food parks.

A large open space is required for the setup of any food park with all modern infrastructure and facilities. In a food park, the land is required for the producing, sorting, grading, packaging unit, warehouses, godowns, and cold storage which is nearly 100 acres. This land is also needed for the storage of materials, and parking of cars, trucks, and internal vehicles. Sankrail is a large operated food park run by the State Government, the Government has encouraged the development of Growth centers through the section of West Bengal Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (WBIDC). The infrastructure facilities provided in this Centre include developed land, an industrial shed, water supply, power supply, street lighting, internal drainage, and a sewerage system by the state government. Other facilities such as telephone, bank, fire stations, and police outposts are also being contemplated for the new growth centre by the state government.

Active support for the project from local and state governments plays an important role. The government has taken several initiatives lately to improve the facilities for the food processing sector to attract and retain investment (*Times of India*, 2014, p.09), such as providing loans with low interest, and tax deductions. The state government, local government, and NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) have taken up different schemes for this food park, which helped to set up and operate this food park successfully. The local government assured the improvement of infrastructural development with an abundant supply of fresh water and electricity, they also give license to the individual companies. The state government has taken a single window agency "SILPA-SATHI", which helped to develop this food park. NABARD reduced the rate of a term loan up to 9.5% for the newly set up small food park. In the year 2020, MoFPI published an office memo (F.No.15-MFPI/14-Mega FP, 05.02.2020) with a consolidated list of 296 designated food parks, where this park is enlisted as FP. Based on this office memo in the year 2021, the Ministry of Food Processing Industry set up a special fund of Rs. 2,000 crores in NABARD to make affordable

credit to agro-processing units i.e., enlisted food parks in Memo (MoFPI,2021, pp.14-16).

The state government has taken different steps to increase investment in this park. The sufficient capital investment helps to set up and extend this food park. In the year 2007, K K Birla set up a food park inphase-I at Sankrail with a joint venture partner investing 100 crore rupees. Gopal Krishna, managing director of WBIDC said this food park phase-II was set up on a potato processing unit by Fritto Ley and PepsiCo. with an investment of Rs 100 crores. In the year 2015, the Amul-owned Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation planned to invest 250 crores at Sankrail Food Park phase-III in West Bengal.

This huge amount of investment helps in the progress, the formation or extension of the food park phase III and to develop and operate this food park (Phase-I & Phase-II) successfully and extend the next phase on 34.59 acres. Table 4 points out the investment in the different three phases of the food park

Conclusion

Traditionally, economic geographers neglected the role of consumers as well as customers' choices for selecting the location of any manufacturing industry. Krugman's theory discusses how the choice of producers and customers helps to choose favourable locations for any industry. It also gave importance to spatial aspects of the economy and transportation. This paper has showcased Krugman's theoretical insights applied to this Food Park. From the above discussion, it is clear that the centripetal forces, transportation facilities, inter-regional migration of labourers, and good political economy act as positive factors in achieving the full potential of this park. However, knowledge spillover, monopolistic economy and technological spillover are not suited to the location of this food park.

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Table -1: List of Exporting Countries from Sankrail Food Park

Productions	Exported Countries
Potato chips	Bangladesh, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Vietnam, Ukraine, Auckland, New York, Singapore, Bangkok
Bakery Biscuits and Cakes	USA, UK, Bangladesh, Kenya, Japan, Spain, Afghanistan, Tanzania, Germany, Nepal, Rwanda
Ice cream	Nepal, Bhutan, Qatar, Singapore, Canada, Seychelles

Source- Ministry of Food Processing Industry, 2005

Table-2: Import of Raw Materials to Sankrail Food Park from different regions

Food processing sectors	Local	Outside States
Chips food processing company	35	65
Ice cream food processing company	15	85
Bakeries food processing company	40	60

Source- Primary Survey,2022

Table -3: Investment in the Sankrail Food Park

Phase of Food Park	Amount of Investment (Crores of Rs.)
PHASE-I	650
PHASE-II	300
PHASE-III	275

Source- The Times of India, published on 13th January, 2014



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